

FEBRUARY 4, 2004

# CCNA, Canada Post focusing on issues

## INSIDE

Working Canada Post to clear up problems for newspapers	1
New Column: Driving Lessons	2
The connection between observation and creativity	3
End Notes	4



*Reprinted from the CCNA Publisher, January 30, 2004*

A number of the changes to Canada Post's Publications and Unaddressed Admail services in January have caused significant problems for Canadian Community Newspapers Association (CCNA) members. Two areas in particular have raised real issues.

The first issue involves the change to inserts in Unaddressed Admail. New regulations require that inserts be folded into, or firmly attached to, the newspaper through a common fold. CCNA's Distribution Committee has been working with Canada Post staff to

find a more workable solution. We are working on the principle that changes should only be required if Canada Post is having a problem with inserts falling out during processing, instead of being applied to all.

The Committee has been impressed by Canada Post's willingness to sit down with us and discuss this issue. We hope that Canada Post will be able to announce amendments to their policy within the next few weeks. We have also been pleased that Canada Post staff has not been enforcing the current regulations during our discussions.

The other major situation that has emerged was the requirement for a 250 threshold for mailings.

There has been some confusion about when the threshold does not apply. According to our most recent information, the threshold does not apply if 50 percent of the addresses are in local and rural areas or are going to non-carrier addresses in the same or neighbouring province. A non-carrier address is identified as having an "O" as the second digit in the postal code.

We are currently in talks with Canada Post on this issue. CCNA needs to determine how widespread the problem is and we are asking that members who are affected by the 250 threshold requirement contact us. Phone: 1-877-305-2262; Email: info@ccna.ca.



# Two New Syndicated Columns

---

BCYCNA has posted two new syndicated columns on our website – “Slice of Life” by Shannon McKinnon and “Topical Cartoons” by Bill Abbott. Both columnists can be found on the Syndicated Columnist page of the BCYCNA website.

## Driving Lessons

**By Shannon McKinnon**

**Columnist / Freelance Writer**

When you have children you get excited about the milestones. Their first words. Their first steps. The first day of school. Today I am in a state beyond excited. I think I might be having a heart attack. I stand rooted to the ground next to the passenger door of the truck, my jelly legs unable to move. I put a hand over my chest and try to remember which side my heart is on. Should the shooting pains be in my left arm or my right?



My son, oblivious to my health conditions, marches out to the truck, slaps his red L on the bumper and slides confidently behind the wheel. He gestures impatiently for me to hurry up and get in already. I choke back a sob of terror and climb inside just as he finishes the pre-flight check of the rear-view mirror. My hands shake as I do up my seatbelt and double check to make sure the airbag light is on.

As my son maneuvers the pickup onto the busy highway, I glance over at his face. My firstborn. It only takes one blink to take me back sixteen years to a baby, sitting in his car seat punching the horn on a plastic Fisher Price toy steering wheel. I stare at him in disbelief. Seeing not the capable man he is becoming, but my baby. My baby who is now guiding a ton of steel at a 100 kilometres an hour down a busy highway towards oncoming traffic. Dear God, what were we thinking?

My son turns to me, an annoyed expression on his face.

“Do you have to keep making all those sounds? Stop whimpering.”

My baby has a really deep voice. I blink again, and the teenager is back.

The thing that's weird about teaching your child to drive is you have to literally switch seats. This is a huge transition to make with a person you used to spoon feed. One minute you're holding his hands so he can walk and now suddenly he's the one in the driver's seat. You're not in control anymore. You're moved over to make room. Instead of steering this little person along, you're crouched down in the passenger seat simply hanging on for dear life.

Never does a parent have to let go in such a dramatic way. Your child can't drive with you reaching over to yank the wheel out of his hands, or stomping on the brake pedal from the passenger side. If you interfere you could both get killed.

Which doesn't stop me from clawing the dashboard and screaming, “What the hell do you think you're doing?” When he puts on his signal light.

“I'm passing.”

“You don't need to pass every vehicle in front of you. Just be patient. We're almost in town.”

“We're half an hour away, and that tractor is only going 15 kilometres an hour. Nothing's coming. I'm passing.”

He looks in his rear-view mirror, checks his blind spot and drives past the tractor, signaling right as he pulls smoothly back into our lane.

I have only just started breathing again as we pull up to the first set of traffic lights in town. Then I notice it. The left signal light is on.

“Are you crazy? What are you turning left for?”

“I thought we were going to the store. The store is on the left.”

“Well yes, but only lunatics make left hand turns. Now listen up. All you have to do to avoid the left turn is drive two more blocks and turn right, then go past the tire shop and turn right at Tim Horton's. Go until you come to that big white motel and turn right again. Drive straight for three blocks and you'll be

**Continued on back page**



# Linking Observation, Creativity

---

**By John Foust**

**Columnist / Freelance Writer**

My mother's friend, Mrs. Patterson, was telling me about her interest in oil painting. "I like to capture a scene as accurately as possible," she said. "After I study the subject matter, I take a photograph."

"And when you paint, you follow the snapshot?" I asked.

"That's a big part of it. But a photograph can't capture everything," she explained.

"Lately, I've been concentrating on clouds. The clouds in my old paintings were flat. They didn't have any character. I just painted a few puffy lines and moved on. Then I realized how much clouds affect the mood of a painting."

"What's the secret of painting clouds?"

"Become more observant. Don't depend on a photograph – or on your memory – to give you enough information. Of course, cirrus clouds are thin and wispy, and cumulus clouds are big and heavy. But look beyond the shape. Look for colour. Some have an orange tint. And some are blue."

As Mrs. Patterson talked, I couldn't help but think about advertising. The best ads are created by people with sharp observation skills.

In my travels, I ran across a store which sold only one product: ties. It was a real store, not a mall kiosk. Thousands of ties were arranged by price and name brand, with traditional designs in one section and trendy styles in another.

The clerks were knowledgeable and upbeat – and I watched them help several customers select ties to match suits they had just purchased (from stores which obviously had less exciting ties). It was a cool place to visit, a fun buying environment.

Later, I saw an ad for the store and felt a sense of

disappointment. It featured their logo and address, along with a yawner of a headline, "Tie, ties, ties." The ad didn't convey any of the coolness I had seen. It could be compared to Mrs. Patterson's old clouds – no depth, no character.

In fairness, maybe that's all the store owner wanted to say. But on the other hand, maybe that was the extent of the ad rep's knowledge.

These days, there's a great deal of emphasis on asking questions to gather information from advertisers.

But there's a problem when the advertiser is too busy – or not able – to articulate the things that would appeal to their target audience. If you place all of your focus on what an advertiser says, you're only getting part of the story.

There is a direct link between observation and creativity. The challenge is to look beyond the obvious. There's more to a cloud than its shape. And there may be more to a store than the manager can adequately describe. If your approach to information-gathering is merely to ask questions, you might be missing out on the good stuff.

Look around. Talk to some customers. You might find a great idea.

"A painting reveals a lot about the painter," Mrs. Patterson said.

Yes, a painting reveals a lot about the person behind it. And so does an ad.

*(c) Copyright 2004 by John Foust. All rights reserved.*

*John Foust conducts on-site advertising training for newspapers, associations and advertisers. His "Basics of Layout and Copy" video is being used by newspapers from coast to coast. For information, contact: John Foust, PO Box 97606, Raleigh, NC 27624 USA, E-mail: [jfoust@mindspring.com](mailto:jfoust@mindspring.com), Phone 919-848-2401.*



# ENDNOTES

---

## Reminder: New Blanket Classified Rates

In case you haven't heard: the new Community Classifieds rate for B.C. & Yukon is **\$349.00** for up to 25 words. Additional words are \$8.00 each. Watch for a package to arrive in the mail sometime in the next couple of weeks, containing new rate cards and updated information. If you have any questions, call **Kerry Burgess** at **1-866-669-9222**.

---

The next **BCYCNA Board of Directors** meeting is on February 12th 2004.

---

**Penny Graham** has been named Associated Publisher of the **Gulf Islands Driftwood Newspaper**.

---

The **Vancouver Sun** has reported that Victoria-based publisher **David Black** put in a proposal to buy Hollinger International B.C. newspapers. If successful, the move will increase Black's newspaper ownership in the province to 72 papers. A proposal has reportedly been sent by Black to Lazard LLC, the New York investment bank handling Conrad Black's Hollinger International Inc.'s assets.

Black Press currently owns 95 papers in B.C., Alberta, Washington State and Hawaii, as well as several web publishing operations. The move would put Black Press in regions where it doesn't have any papers, most notably in the Kootenays.

BCYCNA Update

Publisher:

George Affleck

Editor & Writer:

Allison Grimwood

George Nicolaou

Copy Editor:

Kerry Burgess

---

## Driving Lessons

right back here at this intersection, only there at the other set of lights. Then all you have to do is drive straight. See?"

"But we're here at the intersection right now."

The light turns green. He waits for a break in traffic and turns left.

"I suppose you're going to parallel park instead of letting me give you directions to the parking lot."

He's already backing up.

"I need to be able to parallel park to get my N," he tells me.

"But the parking lot is only seven blocks away."

I need to let go. I need to let him grow up. I need to let him drive. But mostly, I need to stop whimpering.

*Shannon McKinnon lives with her family just outside Dawson Creek, B.C.*

